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FOREST CONTROL

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CONTINUOUS INVENTORY

"Today I have grown taller from walking with the trees."

...Karle Wilson

Milwaukee, Wis. June, 1959 No. 63

THE ACCOMPLISHMENTS OF TEN YEARS

The principle of continuity in inventory controls is as old as business administration. One firm places a complete in and out listing of goods and supplies on the polished desk of the President each morning; another makes quarterly reports, and still others report annually. The merchandise of these companies is found in piles on convenient shelves, but the merchandise of the forester is found on inconvenient and inaccessible shelves.

In spite of the difficult access to the forester's stock on hand, he, too, must make a periodic accounting. This accounting for the past decade has often been in the nature of a woods stock taking, called Continuous Forest Inventory, or CFI.

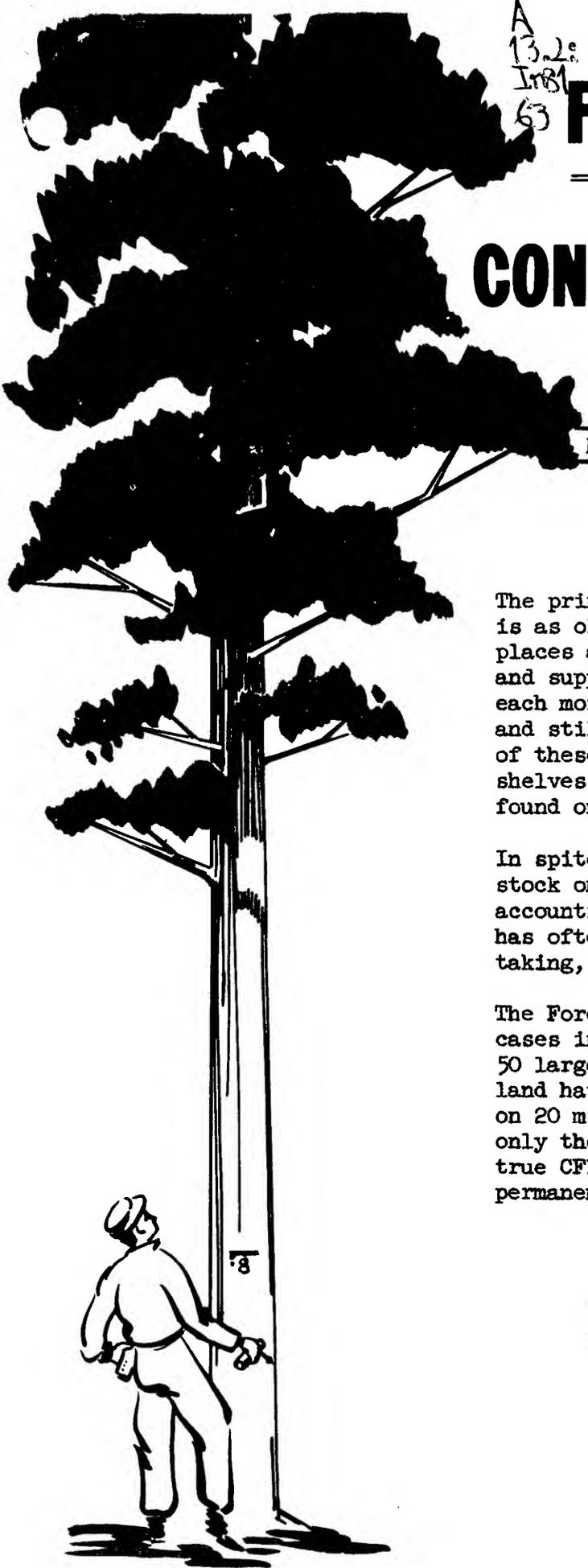
The Forest Service has made a check of the CFI cases in the United States. Findings show 50 large owners and a dozen small owners of forest land have set out 49,000 permanent inventory plots on 20 million acres. This summing up includes only those owners who have accepted and used the true CFI concept of systematic sampling and permanent sample plots.

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CAL STOTT



SPEED, TIME, CONTINUITY, COMMON SENSE
AND
THE CFI SHORT COURSE AT THE UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA

I MUST RUSH, SAID THE TURTLE,
I MUST HURRY, SAID THE SNAIL,
AS THEY CRAWLED AROUND INSIDE
THE SPEEDING SATELLITE'S TAIL.

The CFI short course at the University of Georgia is over and done. An even 150 foresters attended to learn and share their learning of the Region 9 inventory control system.

After the meeting one fine night I sat on the back porch under the stars with Doctor Allyn Herrick, Dean of the School of Forestry at the University of Georgia. A strong scent of southern pines was in the air, and in the background somewhere a Whip Poor Will sang with a soft southern accent. To lose all sense of time under a situation so soporific and soothing was not difficult, even though we spoke of data processing machines and passing current harnessed to produce 60,000 characters per second; even though we imagined a timber cruiser encompassing the earth in only six minutes, at the rate of one step for each character produced by the magnificent machines.

It is very true that we can now handle statistical data with a speed almost beyond belief, but human understanding crawls about a bit more slowly. This is probably because humans have a pretty high coefficient of perverseness. People draw lines and magnify differences. I see these lines and differences very plainly in forestry but I want nothing whatsoever to do with them.

The Ancients were not told to read The Book -----, so and so, and in such wise ----- but only to read The Book and share the wisdom of it. This is still a good rule. It opens The Book to the broad masses instead of limiting it only to special classes.

So, reading the book of the woods is also much more important than the manner of our reading. It makes little difference whether we read of the method as forest inventory controls, as Professor Ken Davis would have it, or continuous forest controls, as the Canadians call it, or continuous forest inventory as it has most commonly been called during the 75 years of its growth and development.

Furthermore, if some one of us questions the need for continuity in the reading of the book of the woods, perhaps because his method will not quite give continuity; and someone else stresses the importance of continuity because his method will assure it; there still need be no lines drawn. These methods and these men will contribute more to the understanding, control and improvement of the forest, working together, than either the methods or the men will contribute working alone.